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pupils should after a few years be able to read Latin authors so as to be able to get the content directly from the Latin, and not only from a Latin English into which the reading is first 'turned' by a sort of mental chemistry, then the practice of *real* translation, of exactly restating the content, first well understood, in good, idiomatic English, will also render large returns in the way of giving our pupils a thorough training in good English.

Teachers trained and experienced in the old method will no doubt find it difficult to adapt themselves to the new. But for the subject of Latin in the High School curriculum it is now a question of to be or not to be, and a fair amount of enthusiasm for the cause should surely enable us to overcome all difficulties. However, I am confident that shortly a method will be found which will prove agreeable and easy to all teachers regardless of their training and former practice¹.

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THE GOLDEN HOUSE OF NERO

A valuable contribution to the history of the Golden House has recently been made by F. Weege, *Das Goldene Haus des Nero*, in the *Jahrbuch des Kaiserlich Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*, 28 (1913), 127-244. It is somewhat surprising that the structure which amazed the ancient world by its size and splendor should still await extensive excavations. Some of the rooms were accessible in Renaissance times, and it is well known that Giovanni da Udine was so impressed by their paintings that he communicated his enthusiasm to Raphael, with the result that the Loggie in the Vatican bear witness to the direct influence of Roman upon Renaissance art. But systematic excavations were not begun until 1811-1814, under de Romanis, when some 48 rooms in the western wing were cleared and opened to the public. As many more, however, in the corresponding eastern wing, are still filled with earth, whose excavation may add important details to the history of art. A beginning has just been made, and it is to be hoped that Weege's further studies may result in a complete plan of the various rooms and a detailed account of their decoration.

The Golden House arose from Nero's desire to join his palace on the Palatine—which he thought too small—with the spacious gardens on the Esquiline and the Oppius. His plan was at first blocked by the fact that the intervening quarter was thickly populated. The *domus transitoria* was devised to meet this difficulty, but had been barely begun when

the great fire of July, 64, devastated this section of the city, and enabled him to realize his dream of a palace where he might live 'as becomes a man'. Some idea of the extent of this imperial villa may be gained from the fact that the park and the palace, according to Huelsen, covered about 125 acres, whereas St. Peter's, the Vatican and its gardens cover about 75. Weege has conveniently brought together all the ancient literature bearing upon this subject. In all of it the prevailing characteristic is the element of wonder.

Weege gives in detail the dramatic story of the destruction of the superstructure of the Golden House, barely 60 years after the death of its creator. Throughout the Middle Ages a few remains were visible, but the memory of the subterranean chambers seems to have been wholly lost. It is well known that the Laokoön group was found here in 1488, although it was not removed until 1506. Convincing proofs are adduced by the author to show that this group once occupied a large niche in a room (80, in his excellent plan) recently excavated in the eastern wing of the palace. During the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries many artists visited the various rooms still accessible and left, tourist-fashion, a record of their presence. Among the famous names are Giovanni da Udine, Polidoro Caravaggio, Pinturicchio, Domenichino, Nicholetto da Modena, Hubert Goltz, Karel van Mander and Simon Louis Du Ry. An exhaustive list of these artists, with references to their sketches and later work reproducing various details of the Golden House, forms one of the valuable features of Weege's article.

After describing graphically his difficulty in crawling about in rooms filled nearly to the ceiling, Weege discusses the plan of the rooms and their decorations. This plan, although a tentative one, is an improvement over that of de Romanis. Rooms 60, 70, and 80, never yet treated and scarcely known, are selected for special study. Of these rooms, 60, the *volta dorata*, is the most splendid. The ceiling, which gives the room its name, in spite of damage, is still a marvel of beauty, as the fine photographs and colored illustrations show. The brilliant reds and blues harmonize with the gilded stucco adornment to form a masterpiece of Roman painting. Among the subjects in the various fields are Hippolytus's departure for the hunt, Nymphs and Satyrs, and the loves of Ares and Aphrodite. Room 70 is a sort of corridor, 61 meters long and 4 meters wide. The ceiling, all that is visible, is again a work of art. If a trial excavation of about 6 meters along one of the walls, disclosing a fine landscape, is a criterion of the rest of the rooms, the history of painting has much to gain by the complete clearing of all the chambers. Room 80 was partially cleared in the spring of 1913. The colors of the ceiling are

¹It should be stated that Professor Schmidt submitted with his brief paper concrete specimens of the method he employs himself, a method which he regards as superior to the Direct Method. Unfortunately, the specimens were not available for printing in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY.

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fresh and fine. The wall paintings, however, were badly damaged. Among the subjects of the ceiling are the farewell of Hector and Andromache, unique among representations of that theme, and Paris and Helen. In this 'Trojan' room, the Laokoön group might well have found a place, although it is difficult to see why such a work should have been left when Apollodorus, Trajan's architect, prepared the foundations for the *thermae*.

Weege's study of the Golden House is the most elaborate that has yet been made. The publication for the first time of many sketches now scattered in various museums, which show careful study of the *aurea domus* by Italian artists, is an admirable feature of this work. The beautiful illustrations warrant the hope that the entire structure may be speedily cleared and that such paintings as appear may help to solve some of the problems of Roman art.

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REVIEW

A Literary History of Rome: From the Origins to the Close of the Golden Age. By J. Wight Duff. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1909). Pp. xvi + 695. \$4.00.

This book by Professor Duff, the latest extensive addition to an already large number of literary histories of Rome, is the tenth volume of The Library of Literary History. The others treat of India, Iceland, Armenia, Persia (in two volumes), Scotland, France, the Arabs, and Russia. In a collection so comprehensive one might expect to find a general survey of Latin literature throughout its entire course rather than a detailed treatment which carries us to the flood-tide of Roman literary achievement and leaves us suspended on the crest of a wave. As Persia has been deemed worthy of two volumes, it may well be that we are to be rescued from our precarious position by an additional tome. Certain it is that the omission of names like Suetonius, Tacitus, Pliny and a host of others would leave the general reader without a just estimate of the literary endeavors of the busy nation beside the Tiber. We have at any rate the consolation of knowing that it is not the 'better half' that is missing.

So great are the strides that have been made in literary scholarship and so bewildering to the general reader (and oftentimes to the investigator) are the minute researches of to-day, that it becomes necessary for some one with a sense of perspective to halt and to collect results for the layman.

This Professor Duff has attempted to do, not in a cold impersonal manner, but after the promptings of his own heart. One unconsciously forms impressions of the writer's personality and is almost inevitably

reminded of the words of Anatole France, who says that "when a man undertakes to talk about literature, he is really talking about himself, and that the critic ought to preface his discourse by some such phrase as: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I am about to speak of myself, apropos of Shakespeare or Racine or Pascal or Goethe'".

In spite of the fact that of all the authors mentioned Julius Caesar and possibly Lucretius may have been the only ones that were born at Rome², the book is called A Literary History of Rome, and rightly so; for the grandeur that was Rome proved a crucible that transmuted things provincial into things of the city. "The prevailing tendency of thought and ambition was centripetal, as in France it has been towards Paris", says Mr. Duff (4). After the Empire the literature is not so distinctly a literature of the Eternal City, and Rome began to lose her preëminence as a court of last resort.

Notwithstanding the imposing array of literary histories that tax our library shelves, we are glad to welcome the new arrival and to perform for it a rather belated *susceptio*. As is the case with so many English publications, the book is exceedingly light in weight, the paper good, the printing clear and distinct. It atones for its Cyclopean bulk by sustaining the reader's interest. In its general appreciation of literary compositions, it resembles to some extent Mackail's Latin Literature, though never speaking of 'cracker mottoes', and never coining startling phrases that glare at one from the page.

To regard it from the layman's standpoint, it fills a niche into which no other work fits. Some books consist mainly of literary criticism, with but a modicum of data; others are useful as handy reference manuals, but uninteresting; and still others, though indispensable for the scholar, have for the general reader too much of the atmosphere of a museum, where everything is dry and lifeless, and specimens are labelled so scientifically as to be confusing to the uninitiated. Professor Duff takes us out into the open where there are the pulsations of life. Those that follow him into this field of study *non passibus aequis* will find entertainment and instruction in his train, while the scholar, too, may profit by his companionship. The book might well lure on from page to page the general reader, the non-classicist as well as the neo-classicist, and the busy Latin teacher who wishes to trace the sequence of events in cause and effect, or who desires to

¹ B. L. Gildersleeve, *Hellas and Hesperia*, 18.

² It has been suggested that this state of affairs may be due to Roman matrons leaving the city, especially during the summer months, for more pleasant places during their *accouchement*. But as a matter of fact, we know definitely in the case of most writers that they were provincials by birth, and that, like Horace, they spread their wings beyond their ancestral nest and sought in Rome freer outlet for their ambitions.